

K-582

1813-1877

Hamilton House; Cedar Point House

Georgetown

Private

The frame Hamilton house is located on the northeastern point of the peninsula on which Georgetown is sited. The main section was probably built after the burning of lower Georgetown by the British in 1813 but before 1877, when it appears on an atlas map of that year. Built in a middle-nineteenth-century vernacular style, it is a modest two-storey, gable-roofed dwelling two bays wide and two deep, with one room on each storey. A shed-roofed true 1-1/2 storey wing was added before 1890 to its north end, approximately doubling the house's size; there have been other, rear additions since then. This house is an example of a modest, plain dwelling built to house a middle nineteenth-century working-class family. The most significant building on the Cedar Point property, however, is the seine house built by the Hamilton family before the turn of the twentieth century because of their dual occupations: working on the water part of the year and doing house-painting in the non-fishing seasons. They needed space to store their seine nets, using the second storey for that purpose. The first storey, with its special small, low ladder door in the north gable end, was for painting equipment. This is the last family to have worked on the water out of Georgetown.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic _____

and/or common Cedar Point (common) Hamilton House (preferred)

2. Location

street & number On point at end of Fish Alley, northeast of Front Street
Georgetown _____ not for publication

city, town Georgetown vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mr. & Mrs. Harry T. Hamilton

street & number RD telephone no.: 648-5269

city, town Galena state and zip code Maryland 21635

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Court House liber EHP 79

street & number Cross Street folio 633

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title _____

date federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. K-582

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The frame Hamilton House is located on Cedar Point, the northeastern point of the peninsula on which Georgetown is sited. The main section, probably build between 1813 and 1877 in a vernacular style, was a modest two-story, gable-roofed dwelling two bays wide and two bays deep, with one room on each story. The original main entry was in the south bay of the west side. Later, but before 1890, a shed-roofed true 1-1/2 story wing (three-sided) that nearly doubled the house's size was added to the north gable-end of the original house. Both sections are the same depth. The western sides, the formal front, of both are spanned by a three-bay shed-roofed porch. The next addition was a shed-roofed, one-story kitchen behind the first wing; the present kitchen is a replacement of an earlier kitchen in the same location, however. It since has been extended to the south for a utility room and bathroom. The interior has been considerably remodeled. There are an original simple carpenter-made mantel in the first-story room of the early section and a pair of unusual adjacent corner stairs, one in each section, though the house is not know to have housed two families. Southeast of the house, on a bank of the point, is a two-story seine house, with board-and batten weatherboard. Aesthetically, this high site overlooking the Sassafras River is one of the finest in Georgetown.

(Continued)

8. Significance

Survey No. K-582

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Circa 1813-1877 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Hamilton house appears to be an example of a modest, plain dwelling built to house a middle nineteenth-century working-class family. It is not one of the more imposing houses of Georgetown. Originally apparently just two rooms, it soon became too small and so has an addition that nearly doubled its size. The most significant building on the Cedar Point property at Georgetown, however, is the seine house built by the Hamilton family before the turn of the twentieth century because of their dual occupations: working on the water part of the year and doing house painting in the non-fishing seasons. They needed space to store their seine nets, using the second-story for that purpose. The first story, with its special small, low ladder door in the north gable end, was for painting equipment.

(Continued)

Both first-storey fireplaces are now closed, but mantels remain. The one in the original section has a high, unmolded rectangular shelf over a deep (11"), plain frieze. The bed molding is a large (ca. 2") ovolo, with a plain, square strip below. The pilasters are 4" wide and are symmetrically corbelled in to a recessed center (two stages). This mantel is not very refined. There is a chimney cabinet at the west end of the chimney, with recessed-panel door.

Ceilings are quite low throughout the house, but somewhat higher in the early section than in the wing. Flooring ends were seen; the flooring is 1" thick and tongue-and-groove. Rafters are sawn with an up-and-down saw. Much of the house has 4x8' sheet panelling, and some floors are carpeted.

To the southeast of the house, on the bank near the river, is an unusual gable-roofed special-purpose building built by the Hamilton family before the turn of the century because of their occupations. The family has always called it a seine house. The family fished with seine nets part of the year in the waters of the Sassafras and its creeks and in the nearby sections of the Bay. They thus needed a place to store their nets. The second storey of the seine house was for nets and other fishing gear. When not fishing, family members were painters (doing graining into the 1930s!) and needed to store long ladders and other gear. Hence the small, low door in the north end of the seine house (the north end's only opening), through which long ladders could be run in and out. The seine house measures about 24 feet wide by 14 feet deep; it is two bays wide on the second storey and three on the first, with the bays irregularly spaced. Windows are double-hung with 6-over-6 lights. It is covered with vertical board-and-batten. There is a low cellar with field stone foundation, apparently for storage of some kind. A small shed addition is on the south end of the seine house; it was partly for a coal shed.

The fenestration of the original section is symmetrical and aligned from first storey to second although the rear, one-storey wing now covers the original rear openings of the main-section first storey. The original main entry of the early section is in the south bay of the west side, but the room within is now used as a bedroom, and the main entry has become the north bay in the west side of the end addition, where the room inside is used as a living room. There are no windows on the south gable-end except for two four-light attic casements, also in the opposite north gable; the north casements just clear the shed roof of the end addition. The original fenestration of the north gable-end prior to the addition there is not known.

Both the early section and its end addition are built over a crawl space. There are no openings for viewing into the crawl space. Both sections appear to rest on a solid fieldstone foundation, but it has been quite heavily parged. One very large stone under the wing protrudes about 7" beyond the weatherboard.

The two larger sections seem to have been at least partly re-sided with weatherboard by the Hamilton family after their ownership began in 1890. In 1985 the west side was covered with vinyl siding. The exposure of the south end of the main section is 7-8" while that of the north is about 4-1/2". Studs of the main section measure 3" x 4".

The early section had one chimney, within the wall in the center of the north gable end. Quite large, it is of dark red brick, with a two-course cap. When the wing was added, a fireplace was built on the first storey and vented into this chimney. There are no second-storey fireplaces.

The roofs are all of standing-seam metal. Cornices are simple and small, and main-section verge boards are flush.

The original main-entry door has two tall, vertical recessed panels, with somewhat flattened ogee-and-bevel panel molding, as on the nearby shutters. Trim is covered. The west-side door to the wing is of beaded board and battens, with shallow, perhaps machine-cut grooves. There is also an entry into the rear wing.

The pair of 180-degree, enclosed corner stairs share a common wall, the north wall of the early section. The original stair, in the northeast corner of the early section, is wider (about 30") than the addition's stair (about 24"), which is located in the southeast corner of the addition. For access on the second storey from bedroom to the other, across the pair of stairs, a triangular-shaped platform had to be built out over the upper stairs; the floor of the early section is also higher than the addition's floor. The door to the wing stair has three wide, beaded boards; the center board is beaded on both edges, with the bead unusually wide, about 5/8". This door is hung on HL hinges. Under both stairs there is a closet. A ladder stair to the attic is above the main stair. The door from the early section's first-storey room to the stair and the under-stair closet door both have four plain, recessed panels on the room side, but they are raised (though not a great deal) and beveled on the stair side.

(continued)

It is likely that if there was a house on this site at the time of the burning of much of Georgetown during the War of 1812 that it was burned. Lower Georgetown was said to have been entirely destroyed. The three buildings known to have survived are all in upper Georgetown, up on the hill one traverses on Route 213. It is even more likely that this prime waterfront site housed a commercial enterprise rather than a dwelling, however.

When the Georgetown peninsula was divided into lots by Gideon Pearce in the 1730s for his planned, chartered town, the Hamilton lot was designated number 1; it may now include part of number 2. Both lots were reached via Fish Alley, a possible clue to the anticipated activity at its water end. This lot was given by Pearce to his son Gideon (along with another lot). (Book 5/46; Dec. 27, 1737) Pearce evidently gave his relatives what were considered prime lots for commercial development. The young Gideon, designated as a "Joyner" sold it in 1759 to William Rasin, "Gentleman," for £7 current money, indicating that there was no building on it at the time. Though this title chain has not been pursued, it should be noted that a Philip Rasin lost a granary to the British during the War of 1812. This site would have been ideally suited for a granary. After the near-destruction of Georgetown it was many years before Georgetown would again prosper and build new buildings. It was not really until Andrew Woodall (b. 1819, d. 1905 or 6) developed his many water-oriented businesses (shipping, lumber) that the town really recovered.

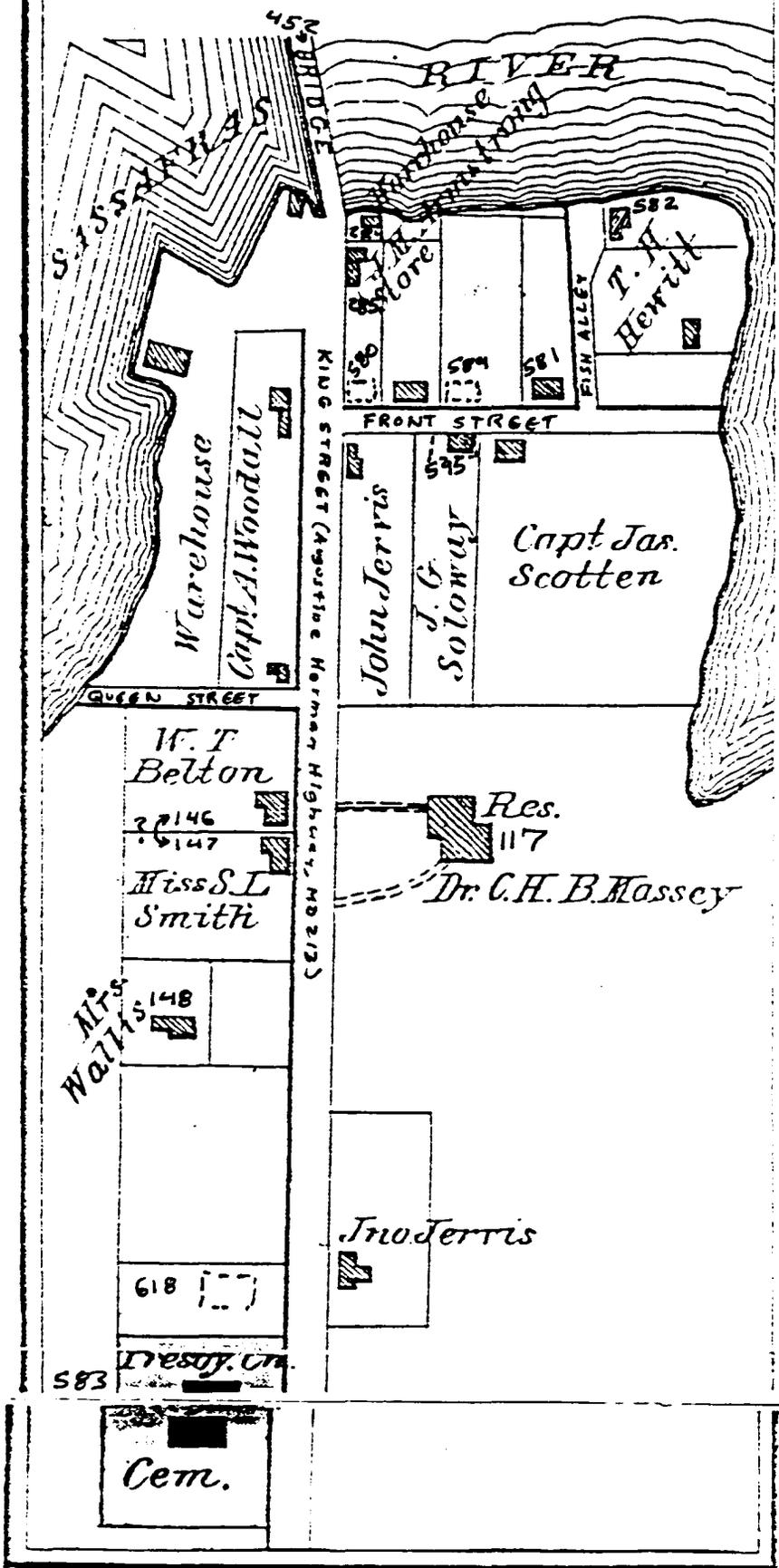
The grandfather of the current owner Harry Hamilton purchased this house and the one to the south in 1890 from Thomas Hewitt, who may be the T. Hewitt shown on the 1877 atlas map of Georgetown. The Hamilton family was the last family that worked on the water to live in and work out of Georgetown.

GEORGETOWN

KENT CO.

Dist. No 7

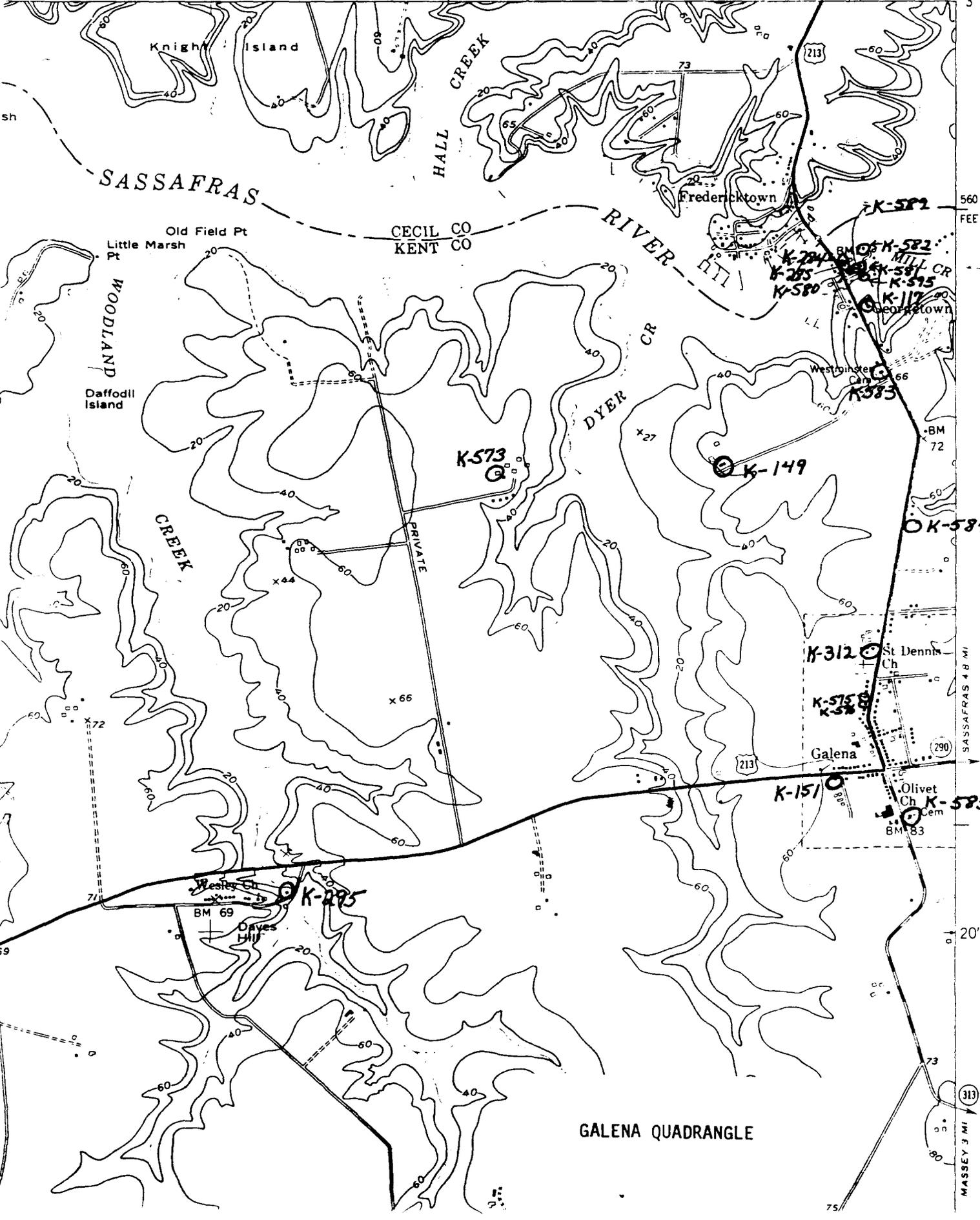
K-582



55'

1:110000 FEET

3



560
FEE

SASSAFRAS 48 MI

20'

MASSEY 3 MI
313

GALENA QUADRANGLE

75



K-582

Hamilton House

Georgetown

M. Q. Fallaw - 9/10/85

View to northeast

K582-19



K-582

Hamilton House

Georgetown

M. Q. Fallaw - 9/10/85

View to northwest

K582-28